

# NORTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD.

## STATEMENT

OF ITS

## RESOURCES AND MERITS,

AS PRESENTED TO THE

PACIFIC RAILROAD COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS, H. R.,

BY

HON. J. GREGORY SMITH,

HON. R. D. RICE, OF MAINE,

HON. WM. B. OGDEN, OF CHICAGO,

GOV. MARSHALL, OF MINN.,

AND EDWIN F. JOHNSON, CIV. ENGINEER,

MARCH, 1868.

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WASHINGTON:  
INTELLIGENCER PRINTING HOUSE,  
Nos. 401 and 403 D Street, near 7th.

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HEARING BEFORE PACIFIC R. R. COMMITTEE, H. R., 1868.

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*To the Honorable Committee on Pacific Railroads:*

The following is a brief of the points made and statistics presented for your consideration at the recent hearing on the Memorial of the Northern Pacific Railroad Company :

## OBJECT DESIRED.

We desire the Government to issue, for the benefit of the Northern Pacific Railroad, its bonds substantially in the form, and to a like amount *per mile* as has been conceded to the Central Pacific and the different branches of the Union Pacific Railroads. This concession is desired as a *basis of credit* to enable the Company to raise the funds wherewith to construct its road with the least practical delay. It is necessary that the Company shall have this aid to enable it to make available the resources secured by its original charter, and place it on a basis of equality with other similar corporations.

## CAN THE AID DESIRED BE SAFELY CONCEDED?

To answer this question intelligently, the surrounding circumstances must be considered.

The districts of the United States immediately interested in the construction of a railroad from Lake Superior to the Columbia river and Puget Sound, present the following area :

	Square miles.
Wisconsin .....	58,924
Minnesota.....	83,531
Dakota.....	240,597
Montana .....	148,776
Idaho.....	90,932
Oregon.....	52,467
Washington.....	69,994
	<hr/>
	735,219

Omitting all Territory south of latitude 44°, there still remains an aggregate area of at least 500,000 square miles, to which the Northern Pacific Railroad is essential as a trunk communication from the East to the West.

#### CHARACTER OF TERRITORY.

*Climate.*—The climate is salubrious, genial, and invigorating, possessing those qualities most conducive to health, efficiency, and longevity in the human race, and to the increase of the animal, and productiveness of the vegetable kingdoms.

*Forests.*—There are found upon this territory the most stately and valuable forests in the world. On the east, and contiguous to the navigable waters of the lakes, are found extensive pineries which are destined to supply the wants of the vast prairie regions South and West. At the West are found those immense forests of pine, fir, spruce, and cedar, which now support a large and increasing commerce, and supply the navies of the great maritime powers with masts and spars for their naval and mercantile marine. We regret to add that these noble forests are being rapidly despoiled on the western coast by unauthorized degradations. Their protection may well challenge the consideration of the Government.

*Agriculture.*—For agricultural purposes most of this territory is unsurpassed. The rich plains of Wisconsin and

Minnesota extend, with only slight interruptions, to the base of the Rocky Mountains, and are capable of producing the cereals and other articles for the food of man absolutely without limitation. No more conclusive evidence of the productiveness of this country can be adduced than the fact that it has ever been, in its natural state, the home in summer and in winter of the buffalo, the elk, and the antelope. Its spontaneous vegetation has supported these animals in countless millions. Its mountains, which have heretofore been deemed stately monuments of desolation only, are found to contain large tracts of land adapted to agriculture, and the production of almost every variety of fruits that are grown in temperate climates.

*Minerals.*—In this Territory are found, in exhaustless quantities, iron, copper, coal, and nearly all the baser metals. Its mountains are also filled with deposits of silver and gold.

The product of gold and silver, for the year 1867, is thus stated by the Mining Commissioners of the Treasury Department, J. Ross Browne and J. W. Taylor.

Montana.....	\$12,000,000
Idaho.....	6,500,000
Washington.....	1,000,000
Oregon.....	2,000,000
	<hr/>
	\$21,500,000

Total product since the discovery, or rather since 1862, has been—

Montana.....	\$65,000,000
Idaho.....	45,000,000
Washington.....	10,000,000
Oregon.....	20,000,000
	<hr/>
	\$140,000,000

*Manufactures.*—This territory must become the seat of manufactures and the mechanic arts. Its forests, its minerals, its capacity to produce wool, hemp, flax, and other staples for manufacture, will call into requisition the vast extent of water power furnished by its mountain streams, and of steam power, to be generated by its inexhaustible deposits of coal.

*Commerce.*—From these resources must spring up a vast commerce, local and foreign, extending across this continent and to the continents East and West of us, thus aggregating and diffusing uncounted wealth.

*Population.*—The present white population in this territory is estimated at the present time (1868) as follows:

Wisconsin.....	900,000
Minnesota.....	350,000
Dakota.....	10,000
Montana.....	30,000
Idaho .....	20,000
Oregon.....	80,000
Washington.....	20,000
	<hr/>
	1,410,000
	<hr/>

This is believed to be rather an under than over estimate. When the country is filled to the capacity it is capable of sustaining and supplying with the necessaries, and even luxuries of life, it will count its millions?

#### PRESENT NECESSITY OF THE GOVERNMENT.

There now resides upon this belt of territory, requiring the constant supervision of the Government, between the latitudes  $44^{\circ}$  and  $49^{\circ}$ , an Indian population, which probably exceeds the following estimate:

Chippewa Nation and others of Wisconsin and Minnesota.....	15,000
Dakota or Sioux, East of the Missouri river.....	5,000
Dakota or Sioux, West of the Missouri, and North of latitude 44°.....	30,000
Crows, Blackfeet, and Shoshones of Montana.....	20,000
Indians of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho.....	30,000
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	100,000

Or nearly one-third of the aboriginal population of the United States, estimated by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to be 306,475.

The Indians of the adjacent districts of British America, especially those east of the Rocky Mountains, will equally require to be held in check by American garrisons and detachments. These may thus be enumerated :

Crees, Chippewas, and Assinniboins of the Red River settlements and vicinity.....	10,000
Blackfeet and other tribes near the Rocky Mountains.....	10,000
Interior tribes of British Columbia, threatening American territory.....	10,000
	<hr/>
	30,000
	<hr/>

Nearly an equal number of Europeans occupy the British territory between longitude 90° and the Pacific Ocean, mostly colonized in Selkirk settlement and the province of British Columbia.

The relations of the whites to an Indian population of 130,000 souls, over a territory ample to make ten states of the size of Pennsylvania, has forced upon the General Government the necessity of large expenditures for military posts and troops on the route mentioned in the charter of the Northern Pacific Railroad Company.

### MILITARY DEFENCE.

Number of posts, 28 ; number of companies, — ; infantry, 65 ; artillery, 6 ; cavalry, 5. Total, 76. Number of troops, 4,500. Stores required for supplying the above number of troops, 22,995 tons per annum.

Cost of transporting these stores under the contracts given in the report of the Secretary of War for 1867, and taking the distances specified in the report of the Quartermaster General, dated November 30, 1866, in response to Senate resolution, \$6,158,972.

General Grant, in his report as Secretary of War *ad interim*, remarks :

" During the last summer, and before I caused inspection to be made of the various routes of travel and supply through the territory between the Missouri river and the Pacific coast, the cost of maintaining troops in that section was so enormous, that I desired, if possible, to reduce it. This I have been enabled to do, to some extent, from the information obtained from these inspections ; but, for the present, the military establishment between the lines designated must be maintained at a great cost per man. The completion of the railroads to the Pacific will materially reduce this cost, as well as the number of men to be kept there. The completion of those roads will also go far towards a permanent settlement of our Indian difficulties."

*Postal Service.*—The Government paid for transporting the mails on the line now occupied in part by the Union Pacific and Central Pacific Railroad during the year 1867, \$750,000.

It is not unreasonable to say that the communities residing on or contiguous to the lines to be accommodated by the Northern Pacific Railroad will, from this time forward, require a mail service as expensive, to say the least, as that on the Central line. Hence there will be an additional expenditure of \$750,000.

These two items of expenditure alone amount to—

Military Service.....	6,158,972
Postal Service.....	750,000
Total.....	\$6,908,972

In this, no account is made of the sums paid by the various Departments of the Government for telegraphing, which is believed to be large.

By the provisions of our bill one-half of the amount charged for Government service is to be applied to the liquidation of claims for interest paid on the bonds advanced to the Company. The whole amount of the subsidy will be, when the entire road is completed, \$53,040,000.

Annual Interest..... \$3,182,400  
The military and postal service—one-half ap.

appropriated to pay interest of bonds..... 3,454,486

Thus showing that from this service alone the Government will be more than indemnified for its advances to the Company, by payment of interest on its bonds.

#### OPERATION OF OTHER COMPANIES.

The actual operation of other companies, as shown by their reports, exhibit results more favorable even than above suggested.

Thus the Central Pacific, the Union Pacific, and Eastern Division, all exhibit very considerable sums due them for Government service (one-half of the amount of that service only being thus applied) after paying the interest of the bonds advanced to them by the Government.

#### THIS NOT THE FULL VIEW OF THE CASE.

The foregoing is by no means a full view of the case. The payment of the military and postal service of the Government is one of the smallest items of account in an economical point of view.

## PRIVATE TRANSPORTATION.

Whatever tends to diminish the cost of private business, thereby increases the wealth of the citizen and benefits the Government. The amount paid for fares and transportation of merchandise into this territory, even with its sparse population, is startling, and its effect in retarding the growth and the development of the country can hardly be estimated.

Col. W. F. Sanders, of Montana, authorizes the following statements of the amount paid annually by the Government of the United States, and by the people of Montana, for transportation. During 1867 there were 40 arrivals of steamers by the Missouri river, averaging 150 tons of freight, an aggregate of 6,000 tons. An equal quantity was delivered from the West and South. He estimates that the charges for freight and insurance were 25 cents per pound, which, on 12,000 tons, would be \$6,000,000. If the population of Montana is 30,000, this would be \$200 *per capita*: if the population is 60,000, as sometimes claimed, \$100 *per capita*. A merchant is deprived for several months of the year of the use of his capital—a very considerable loss of interest. In addition, the unavoidable expenses of travel, incident to the business of the country, is an immense tax. A trip to the Eastern cities or to the Pacific coast requires a direct expenditure of \$1,000. It is estimated that twenty such journeys weekly are already incident to the intercourse of the people with the business centres of the country, and, if so, another million must be added to the account of transportation expenses. The wonder is, notwithstanding the richness and productiveness of the Montana mines, that such a burthen can be borne; while the effect upon prices can be readily conceived.

The channel of the Missouri affords but partial relief. It is closed in winter, and is sometimes of difficult navigation from other obstacles.

This statement of the amounts paid for transportation in

Montana will not seem improbable when it is remembered that \$13,000,000 in gold was paid in 1863 for transportation eastward from San Francisco to the State of Nevada and Territories east of the Sierra Nevada.

Other portions of the line are suffering to an equal extent with Montana from the same causes.

#### EFFECT OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THIS ROAD.

To construct this road will change the whole order of things at the West. It will, in an inconceivably short space of time, convert these vast plains, now laying waste and unproductive, into fruitful fields ; it will supplant the herds of buffalo, elk, and deer, with countless flocks and herds of domestic animals ; it will occupy the streams of water now running waste with manufactories and mechanics' shops, giving comfort and remunerative employment to thousands on thousands of intelligent citizens ; it will extract from the mountains untold millions of the precious metals ; it will raise and utilize vast amounts of coal that now lie buried and useless in the mines ; it will convert the iron and copper ores now reposing in the earth into implements for the use of man, or commodities for commerce ; it will change the forests into thousands of new forms for the use, comfort, and profit of our people ; it will fill the channels of commerce with merchandise, and give additional employment and increased wealth to the busy throng that now crowd our commercial centres ; it will induce an increased emigration of the industrial classes from the Old World, and furnish them cheap and comfortable homes ; IT WILL TERMINATE INDIAN WARS, and supplant the savage Indian, who now roams over these fertile plains and rich mountains, by an intelligent, industrious, civilized population ; and, finally, it will add, almost beyond the power of computation, to the wealth and taxable property of the coun-

try, and with the development of other portions of the West, by other and similar lines of railroad, furnish the means for the PAYMENT OF THE NATIONAL DEBT, which now hangs like an incubus upon our people.

#### RAILWAYS AND NATIONAL DEBT.

The Governments of France, Spain, Belgium, Holland, Austria, Portugal, and Italy, have all rendered substantial and efficient aid in the construction of railways. All of these countries have, from these sources, provided means which will practically extinguish their public debts within periods not remote. And it has been remarked that England is almost the only nation in Europe that does not act upon the principle "*that railways are the true sinking fund for the payment of the National debt.*"

#### RAILWAYS IN INDIA.

Although England has not made her railways at home a sinking fund for the payment of her National debt, she has practically done so with marked success in India. To stimulate the production of cotton in India and bring it to market, the Government granted its credit to private companies by guaranteeing interest on the amount of \$140,000,000 for the construction of 4,600 miles of railroad. This system worked so well that, last year, several India railways exceeded the five per cent. of guaranteed interest, and some of them were able to declare surplus dividends.

The net amount of guaranteed interest diminishes year by year. In 1865 the guaranteed interest was £1,450,000; in 1866 it was £800,000, and this year, 1867, only £600,000 was required.

This liberal policy has had a wonderful effect in developing the resources of India. *It makes it the greatest cotton-growing country in the world.*

## CAN GOVERNMENT AFFORD TO WITHHOLD THE DESIRED AID?

In view of existing facts, this question is particularly pertinent. Can Government *afford* to maintain a comparatively inefficient military establishment in our Indian country and on a frontier line, at such vast labor and expense? Can it *afford*, in these days of railroads and telegraphs, to disseminate intelligence by the slow process of the mail coach and horse-back rider? Can it afford to permit millions on millions of acres of its most fertile lands to lie waste and unproductive, to be roamed over by savages, instead of being converted into cultivated fields and made the homes of prosperous citizens? In a word, can Government afford to permit such vast amounts of property to remain undeveloped and unproductive, when, by so small an outlay, it can be made in the highest degree productive? We think not. This stand still policy is, to us, a most expensive and losing policy.

## PROMPT ACTION DESIRABLE.

Time is material. The territory to be developed lies upon the frontier. Contiguous to it, over the border, is also a territory containing some 500,000 square miles, possessing more than two thousand miles of lakes and rivers which are navigable by steam, and capable of sustaining a population of twenty millions; possessing a climate, soil, and mineral wealth scarcely less desirable and valuable than our own. This country is now sparsely inhabited by a people having their principal commercial and social relations on our side of the border. These people naturally gravitate to us. The construction of our road, at once, would secure their trade and friendship in the future. By delay that friendship and trade may be lost.

Already the project of constructing a Pacific Railroad on British soil, north of our border, is matter of serious consideration. Influential parties from Canada are now under-

stood to be in England to urge upon the British Government the necessity of granting a liberal subsidy for the construction of this road. It will constitute an extension of the Inter-Colonial Railroad, which has already received the aid of the Imperial Government, and form a link in the great contemplated line which is intended to span the continent, and bind together, as it were in chains of iron, the different British provinces on this continent, and form a great channel of commerce between Europe and Asia. The construction of such a road would exclude from us the business of that great territory, and the wealth consequent thereon, and preclude the idea of political relations between that people and our own.

#### THE PEOPLE EXPECT IT.

The Northern Pacific Railroad has for many years been a favorite enterprise with the people. Its necessity and practicability has been strongly felt by the people of the great Northwest. They and the people of the North generally have seen without envy or regret the Government aid liberally expended in the development of territory and lines of railroad south of them, while their claims have thus far been postponed. *They now think their time has come;* that the interests of the Northwest and of the Nation alike require immediate action on the part of Congress; that longer delay would be unjust to them, and injurious to the public interests. We therefore most respectfully submit our memorial, and ask that the aid therein desired be granted. We ask this aid of present credit from the *Government* because it is of all parties most interested in the success of the enterprise.

## ENGINEER'S ESTIMATES AND REPORT.

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*Cost as stated in Report of Engineer-in-Chief.*

	Distance Miles.	Estimated Cost.
<b>FIRST DIVISION.</b>		
Lake Superior to Rocky Mountains.....	895	\$56,142,500
Second or Rocky Mountain Division.....	660	65,686,000
Third or Cascade Range Division.....	220	18,549,000
Total Main Line.....	1,775	\$140,377,500
Oregon Branch.....	200	16,480,000
Total Main Line and Branch. ....	1,975	\$156,857,500

### SUBSIDIES ASKED FOR:

First Division.....	\$16,000 per mile.
Second Division.....	48,000     "
Third Division.....	32,000     "
Oregon Branch.....	32,000     "

*Estimate of the yearly progress of the road, and annual liability of the Government for interest upon the bonds issued to the Company; Main Line and Branches.*

			Interest payable each year, 6 per cent.
FIRST YEAR, 1868.			
The entire of this year probably occupied in surveys and location.			
SECOND YEAR, 1869.			
A portion of this year occupied as in 1868.			
60 miles constructed in Minnesota, subsidy in bonds, as per bill....	.....	\$960,000	
THIRD YEAR, 1870.			
120 miles constructed in Minnesota, subsidy .....	\$1,920,000		
20 miles constructed from Fort Benton west.....	960,000	2,880,000	
140			
— Total subsidy to January 1, 1871.....	.....	3,840,000	\$57,000
200 total.			
FOURTH YEAR, 1871.			
160 miles in Minnesota, &c., subsidy	2,560,000		
20 miles in Montana, west of Fort Benton.....	960,000	3,520,000	
180			
— Total subsidy to January, 1872.....	.....	7,360,000	230,400
380 total			
FIFTH YEAR, 1872.			
160 miles in Dakota to point 25 miles west of Missouri River, subsidy.....	2,560,000		
20 miles west of Fort Benton.....	960,000		
20 miles west slope Blue Mountains, Colorado Valley.....	960,000		
20 miles across Cascade Range....	640,000	5,120,000	
220			
— Total subsidy to 1873....	.....	12,480,000	441,600
600 total.			

SIXTH YEAR, 1873.			Interest payable each year, 6 per cent.
200 miles Dakota, &c., subsidy.....	\$3,200,000		
40 miles west Fort Benton to west side main divide.....	1,920,000		
20 miles west slope Blue Mountains, Colorado Valley.....	960,000		
20 miles across Cascade Range.....	640,000	\$6,720,000	
<u>280</u>			
Total subsidy to 1874.....	19,200,000		\$748,800
880 total.			
SEVENTH YEAR, 1874.			
120 miles Montana, Yellow Stone Valley, subsidy .....	1,920,000		
40 miles Montana, west of main divide.....	1,920,000		
40 miles west slope Blue Mountains, Colorado Valley .....	1,920,000		
40 miles across Cascade Range to east side summit.....	1,280,000	7,040,000	
<u>240</u>			
Total subsidy to 1875.....	26,240,000		1,152,000
1,120 total.			
EIGHTH YEAR, 1875.			
75 miles Montana, Yellow Stone Valley, to mountains, subsidy.....	1,200,000		
60 miles Montana, west of main divide.....	2,880,000		
40 miles west slope Blue Mountains, Colorado Valley.....	1,920,000		
40 miles across Cascade Range.....	1,280,000	7,280,000	
<u>215</u>			
Total subsidy to 1876.....	33,520,000		1,574,400
1,335 total.			
NINTH YEAR, 1876.			
40 miles E. of Ft. Benton, subsidy.	1,920,000		
30 miles west main divide to Flathead River .....	1,440,000		
80 miles west slope Blue Mountains, Colorado Valley .....	3,840,000		
40 miles across Cascade Range.....	1,280,000	8,480,000	
<u>190</u>			
Total subsidy to 1877.....	42,000,000		2,011,200
1,525 total.			

TENTH YEAR, 1877.				Interest payable each year, 6 per cent.
60 miles east of Fort Benton, subsidy.....		\$2,880,000		
130 miles Clark's R. Valley to Pend d'Oreille Lake.....		6,240,000		
60 miles Cascade Range.....		1,920,000	\$11,040,000	
250 Total subsidy to 1878, Main Line, 1,775 miles.....			53,040,000	\$2,520,000
1,775 total. Jan., 1879.—Interest max'm...				3,182,400
BRANCH LINE TO PORTLAND.				
60 miles, first year, subsidy.....	1,920,000	1,920,000		
60 miles, second year, subsidy....	1,920,000	3,840,000		115,200
80 miles, third year, subsidy.....	2,560,000	6,400,000		230,400
Interest maximum.....				384,000

*Estimate of Revenue and Expenses of Main Line, 1,775 miles,  
when complete and in operation.*

General freight, based on experience of roads in Wisconsin and Minnesota, and of Union Pacific Roads, &c...	\$14,200,000 00
Passengers ..... do..... do..... do.....	6,900,000 00
Express—United States, Canada, Europe, and Asia.....	700,000 00
U. S. Mail, Canadian, European, and Asiatic Mails.....	500,000 00
Government Military Transportation, now 28 posts. The Government pays transportation for these \$6,000,000.	
The number will be greatly increased on the opening of the Road for a period, and the revenue therefrom may properly be assumed at .....	4,000,000 00
Transportation for Posts of Hudson Bay Company.....	1,000,000 00
Telegraph—(net profits).....	300,000 00
Land Grant, assumed as equivalent to annual revenue of	
Gross annual revenue.....	\$30,000,000 00
Less cost of operating and maintaining, estimated at 60 per cent .....	18,000,000 00
Net income.....	\$12,000,000 00
Government subsidy, assumed at \$53,040,000 (will probably be less) the allowance of one mile in each four or five miles of distance for increase in consequence of deviations from a direct course on the unmeasured portions, being a very large allowance. Interest on this subsidy, at 6 per cent., is..... \$3,182,400 00	
Company bonds, same amount as subsidy interest, at 6 per cent.....	3,182,400 00
Leaves to meet other obligations and for dividends.....	6,364,800 00
	\$5,635,200 00

The preceding estimate of revenue is based upon the best information attainable, from the experience of other lines of road under circumstances approximately similar, and a proper consideration of the resources of the country traversed by the road, and the very important office it will perform as the leading trans-continental line to the Pacific.

The estimate is presented for the entire line from the belief that the business and revenue upon the portions first built will come fully up to the estimate as soon as put in operation. Take for instance the portion from Lake Superior to the Red river, 232 miles.

Between the Lake and the Mississippi is a timber region which only awaits the building of the road to find at once a profitable market. Upon the Mississippi, and to the west of it, near to the Red river, is a beautiful farming region, about one-half or more prairie, equal to the finest portions of Wisconsin and Northern Illinois, in which is already a large population, which is being daily augmented. This population is now engaged in growing wheat and other cereals and corn, which can only find a market by the long and expensive railway route of four hundred miles and over, to Milwaukie or Chicago; when, by means of the Northern Pacific route, it can be taken to Lake Superior on a railway of one-third the extent, where it will be as near to Eastern markets by lake and canal navigation as in Chicago.

In the lower part of the Red river valley, one of the finest wheat growing districts of the continent, is a very large population, numbering about twenty thousand, who have no market beyond their own limits; but will, when the Northern Pacific road is opened to the Red river, send annually tens of thousands of bushels of wheat and barley to Lake Superior; and to the north and northwest are the numerous posts of the Hudson's Bay Company, which will contribute very largely to the business of the road.

From the Red to the Missouri river, a distance of only

250 miles, the road can be rapidly constructed ; and, when built, will open up through the navigation of the Upper Missouri a direct communication by steam between the portion of Montana, now being most rapidly settled, and Lake Superior, or the valley of the Mississippi and the country east. This part of Montana is undoubtedly the richest region of its size in our country. It is rich in all metals, rich in soil, in climate, in timber, and coal ; rich in an enterprising and industrious population, and in everything that constitutes a desirable residence for man. In no portion of our country has settlement advanced at a more rapid rate, and in no other has it been possible to support more easily a rapidly increasing population by subsistence grown within its own borders. This population has now no suitable communication with the older portions of our country, except through the navigations and connecting stage lines of the Clark and Columbia rivers to the Pacific ; the long and costly navigation of the Missouri river for over three thousand miles to St. Louis ; or by the circuitous and very costly route south towards Salt Lake, and thence on to the Union Pacific road ; and in winter they are almost as thoroughly secluded and immured as if shut in upon all sides by impassable mountains.

Another portion of railway of 200 miles, passing through the growing towns of Montana, will connect the navigation of the Missouri with the navigable waters of Clark's river, and still another of 160 miles in extent will connect the navigation of Clark's river 130 miles lower down, with the navigation of the Lewis or Snake river and the Columbia, which reach, with but two short interruptions at the Dalles and the Cascades, to the tide waters of the Pacific ; and upon these navigations steamers are now running, and are incapable of doing properly the work required of them.

Still another 220 miles of railway, from the Columbia river across a low divide of 3,000 feet elevation in the Cascade range of timbered highlands, will connect the valley

of the Columbia by the shortest route with Puget Sound, on the shores of which is already a large and increasing population with an unrivalled series of harbors, unsurpassed in position for concentrating the trade of the Pacific.

We are confident that we are not mistaken when we state that the estimate of revenue, &c., as above of the entire line of the Northern Pacific road, is a fair indication and exhibit of what will at once be experienced by the construction of any of its portions named ; and when these are constructed, as they doubtless will be first, the remaining portions are sure also to prove, when built, equally productive. On the question, therefore, of the security of the Government, there is no route for a railway across the Continent that offers a better or so good a guaranty as the Northern Pacific road, because of the superiority of the country traversed by it, and its unrivalled position in its connections with lake and river and ocean navigation, and richness in metals ; and we feel assured that we speak only truth when we state that the opening of the Northern route to the Pacific, as proposed, which can only be done by the aid asked for from the Government, will not only not take a single dollar ultimately from the public treasury, but will, on the contrary, open up a wide field for labor, bring to us from other lands capital and population in large amount and numbers, and prove one of the most certain and effective means of speedily lessening the burthen of debt entailed upon the country by the late war.

EDWIN F. JOHNSON,

*Engineer-in-Chief N. Pacific Railroad.*

IRA SPAULDING,

*Chief Engineer Minnesota Division N. P. R. R.*

JAMES TILTON,

*Chief Engineer Pacific Division N. P. R. R.*

To Hon. J. GREGORY SMITH,

*President N. Pacific Railroad Company.*

WASHINGTON, D. C., March 28, 1868.

## DISTANCES.

	<i>Miles.</i>
New York to San Francisco, via St. Louis, Albu-	
querque, and south point of Sierra Nevada range....	3,272
New York to San Francisco, via Chicago, Salt Lake,	
Union, and Central Pacific roads.....	3,361
New York to Seattle, Puget Sound, via Chicago, St.	
Paul, and the Northern Pacific road.....	3,124

The above are the distances upon the several routes as given in the latest reports of the companies named.

The actual practical difference, as a means of transit for freight and passengers, is very much greater than is indicated by the difference in length, because of the lower gradients, not exceeding a maximum of 80 to 90 feet per mile, against 116 feet per mile, the maximum on the Salt Lake route, and comparatively less rise and fall on the Northern route, amounting to over 10,000 feet, from the best evidence that can be obtained, a difference equivalent to over 200 miles of horizontal distance.

By reason also of the more northerly position of Seattle as a terminus on the Pacific, the ocean distance to the principal cities of Eastern Asia is lessened from 500 to 700 miles, and will possess the character to a certain degree of a coast route on which supplies of provisions and coal can be obtained at points which will enable vessels to increase the amount of their paying freight.

The Northern Route, therefore, aside from its connection, 1,500 miles distant from New York city, with the cheap navigation of the lakes; its connections throughout its course with important river navigations; the superior character of the country and of the climate generally; and its

exceeding richness in minerals of all kinds, and large amount of timber upon portions of it, is the best route to the Pacific, by a difference in its favor, as compared with the other routes, of from 350 to 500 miles.

If the routes be extended to the shores of Asia, the difference stated above will be further augmented in favor of the Northern Route by 500 to 700 miles of ocean navigation.



